



**Islesboro, Waldo County, ME Pre-application Letter  
ConnectME Grant Round 4**

**1.) A description of the communications with nearby incumbent or existing broadband service providers for current and future plans for expansion in the proposed project area;**

There are no providers in the area we seek to cover. It is outside of the range of DSL. There is no cable. We have tried some wireless in the area without good success, having been hampered by very thick and tall trees. Nobody else provides wireless in the area we seek to cover due to the tree density issues.

**2.) A description of the proposed project, including: the type of service to be provided, indicating the technology used; the estimated upstream and downstream speeds of the service to be provided; and an estimate of the time required to complete the proposed project;**

Midcoast Internet Solutions (MIS) intends on deploying a fiber optic network from our existing tower on the north part of the island. The fiber technology shall be single mode 100mbps active ethernet based service from the tower to each customer. (Every customer will have their own strand of fiber going back to the tower). The service could be upgraded to gigabit on a per customer basis with an equipment swap. The Internet uplink speeds will be 3,6, or higher mbps depending on customer choice and budget. Prices will start at \$42/month The uplink to the Internet will be the existing tower at the Salt Shed site on the north part of Islesboro. The project is estimated to take 7 months to complete. All details regarding project will be submitted with Final Application.

**3.) The total amount of funding requested from the Authority;**

Midcoast Internet Solutions will be requesting the amount of: \$15,000 with MIS providing matching funds near \$18,000.

**4.) The applicant's financial capability and commitment to the project in addition to the funding requested from the Authority and other funding sources;**

MIS has been and will be contributing a mix of labor, technical skills including mapping, tower climbing, construction, fiber splicing, Internet experience, insurance, equipment, arranging property owner permission, ferry and boat rides for working with the selectmen, and coverage of unanticipated expenses. We have spent about \$2000 in labor researching options for Waldo County using some of these skills. Insurance will be inexpensive, and unanticipated expenses could range from \$0 to \$5000 based on our prior experience. We expect to utilize about \$12000 in labor for the project. We will also be delivering Internet to the existing tower for the project on our own network at our own infrastructure expense. After 50 installations, we will be purchasing solely at our expense any customer or infrastructure equipment needed to hook up customers; this is usually about \$440 average per customer. Our commitment to the project is based on our relationship with our customers and the town of Islesboro. The town provides the tower site and we built the tower with the mutual goal of getting broadband throughout Islesboro's unserved parts. The tower has enhanced our ability to do this, but dead spots remain due to extremely thick woods. The only ways to serve them would be; fiber optics to the customer, lower frequency radio like the TV white space bands for which there is no equipment on

the market yet, or a forest fire to clear the trees, which the town does not favor. Fiber is preferred as it is comparable in cost to wireless for this small project and has the capacity and future-proof abilities not otherwise available.

**4.) The percentage of households in the unserved area that will have access to the new service and the estimated number of customers who will benefit from the project who are currently unserved;**

All users in the service area will have the ability to receive the service. There are about 100 properties in the area we are seeking to cover. We have limited the scope of the project to a particular geographic area in order to ensure a simple and manageable project. After successfully completing the project, we hope to allow the scope of the coverage to expand with 100% private financing.

**5.) Public-private partnerships that have been established and an indication of community support for the proposed project; and**

Midcoast Internet Solutions is working with local land owners to establish a business relationship regarding stringing the fiber optic cable across private land. Letters have been sent to most of the property owners involved. We have also been working with the town board of selectmen extensively. The town leases the tower site to us so that the town's citizens can get broadband. The town continues to lease the site and is working with us to help cover the remaining unserved part of the island.

**7.) A description of the applicant's experience relevant to the proposed project.**

Midcoast Internet Solutions has successfully completed two projects that were directly involved with ConnectME Somerville in 2007/08 and Jefferson in 2009. Both locations are using the latest in fixed wireless technology to provide maximum throughput in a non-line of sight situation.

Some of our customers on the island have fiber already. This is where the cable run from their radio location to their residence is longer than a normal copper network cable will work (100m). We have also reliably used fiber for more than ten years to connect tower sites to property owners to eliminate lightning risks. This is done in Owls Head, Somerville, Jefferson, Islesboro, and Camden. We have also used fiber to link our Rockland data center to the Internet for many years. Midcoast also operates and continues to build out a new fiber network in Georgetown on a property association on a 1.5 mile long peninsula. We also use it in Camden to serve the Opera House and the businesses in the building across the street. We have multiple staff trained in the use of fiber fusion splicing and connector termination.

We have also provided wireless broadband on Islesboro for many years. We have a long relationship with the residents and town leaders as we have used various public and private facilities on the island to provide broadband coverage.

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